

Dear Pool Operator,

This document is for informational purposes only. In December 2007, President Bush signed into law the Virginal Graeme Pool and Spa Safety Act. The law mandates that Public Swimming Pools and Spas be equipped with anti-entrapment main drain covers that comply with ASME/ANSI A112.19.8-2007 performance standard. In addition to the anti-entrapment main drain covers, any swimming pool or spa which is constructed with a single main drain must be equipped with a device or system designed to prevent entrapment such as one of the following:

1. Safety vacuum release system
2. Suction limiting vent system
3. Gravity drainage system
4. Automatic pump shut-off system
5. Other systems determined by the Consumer Product Safety Commission to be equally or more effective than one of the above systems.

The Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health is strongly recommending that pools currently constructed with a single main drain are retrofitted with dual (split) main drains. The drains must be separated by at least three (3) feet. Piping must be connected in a “T” configuration. In the event one of the drains becomes covered, the other uncovered drain will draw water, allowing a “break in suction” on the covered drain. This is intended to prevent bathers who accidentally cover one of the main drains from being entrapped on the main drain cover due to the suction across the main drain. Permanently disabling or plugging up the main drain is not an option allowable under the current state codes.

The Virginal Graeme Pool and Spa Safety Act requires that such modifications be in effect by December 19, 2008. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is the primary enforcement agency for the Act. With the exception that any new or replacement grate will have to meet this nationally recognized standard, the Division of Environmental Health will not enforce the standards locally unless the California state law is amended.

Be advised that any renovations including splitting the main drains or adding devices to the Public Swimming Pool or Spa must be approved by the Environmental Health Services Plan Check Program. The contact Plan Check, you may call (909) 387-0214. For context of the new federal code, go to www.nspf.org or www.cpsc.gov.